

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A communication method using an first access (3) including at least one information channel (4) for transmitting voice and first data and one signaling channel (5) for transmitting signaling signals and second data relating to at least one of the first data to be transmitted and/or to said access, characterized in that said method further comprising the step of providing at least one additional signaling channel is constituted (9-11) on a different physical medium from said first signaling channel and for use in conjunction with said one information channel, determining an order of priority of the use of the signaling channels is determined (14,15), and assigning the highest priority functional signaling channel is assigned to the access.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the information channel for transmitting voice and first data is on a different physical medium to/from at least one of the signaling channels (5,9,10).

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the operational status of the highest priority signaling ~~channel~~ is regularly tested (17) when said highest priority signaling channel is not in service.

4. (Currently Amended) A method ~~according to claim 1, characterized in that the use of one or more~~ A communication method using an first access (3) including at least one information channel (4) for transmitting voice and first data and one signaling channel for transmitting signaling signals and second data relating to at least one of the first data to be transmitted and said access, said method further comprising the step of providing at least one additional signaling

channel for use in conjunction with said one information channel, determining an order of priority of the use of the signaling channels, and assigning the highest priority functional signaling channel to the access, said method further comprising the step of neutralizing at least one, but less than all, of said information B-channels is neutralized (23) if the Dsignaling channel in service is not sufficiently functional.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that an access provides thirty Binformation channels.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that a channel (26) formed in a signaling path of ~~another~~ a second access is constituted as an additional Dsignaling channel for use in conjunction with information channels of said first access.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of communication in which: at least two accesses are used between two exchanges (1,2) each having at least one Binformation channel (4) for transmitting voice and data, ~~characterized in that~~ said method further comprising: providing a common Dsignaling channel (24,26) is constituted for transmitting signaling signals relating to at least one of data to be transmitted and/or to said accesses, sharing on said common signaling channel signaling signals relating to at least two accesses are shared on said channel, and managing the two accesses are managed (23) using the signaling signals delivered by said common signaling channel.